Girl Captures Prize Snake of Expedition to Restock Bronx Zoo



THE CABIN IN FRONT OF WHICH GLADYS DITMARS CAUGHT A. DIAMOND BACK RATTLER GLADYS IS IN the CENTER OF the PICTURE.

pectively, of the New York Zoological Great River cypress swamp of South Carolina, forty miles up the Savannah River, a few weeks ago to bag enough snakes and alligators and toads and things like that to replenish the stock of the zoo, they made their home and abin on the reservation of the Pine Land Club, which is composed of a

started to give it, while Mr. Ditmars or three weeks, or until they had capplaces in the snake dens of Bronx

The Piccaninny Finds a Monster

The sixth member of the snake hunting expedition was a dirty, ragged George Washington Jackson was a sort of general factotum and all around servant. He carried, before the expedition was over, everything from bags of snakes to buckets of water, although he never carried a snak that he didn't protest vigorously and with much rolling of his big eyes. George Washington Jackson helped with the housecleaning, getting in the way and driving a few toads and inumerable cockroaches from the safe aven of the cabin into the dangers the swamp, and finally Mrs. Ditmars got the idea that a big huckleberry ple would be a fine thing to offer husband and Mr. Snyder when they came back from their first snake hunt. Swamps in that section literally warm with wild berry patches, which s one of the reasons why it is such a

go out and pick enough huckleberries

So George Washington Jackson got very frightened little negro dashed into the cabin and plunged head first under a table

What's the matter?" asked Mrs

"Lawsy massy!" exclaimed George Washington Jackson. "I done almost but my foot right on the biggest snake thoy is in the whole world! They is snake out in dat berry patch big. Then she went back into the cabin such an overdose of gray matter. fer'n what a elefunt is big!"

Come out and show us where i is" asked Gladys Ditmars. "No, mam!" said George Washingten Jackson, positively, "I aint goin so near dat enake! Dat's the bigges rettiin' snake in the whole wide

rattler can strike, for instance, which would be safe until time abandoned cabin was in the knows how to escape the bite of a manent home in weird portion of that weird coun- snake and what to do if the reptile's fangs do happen to sink into a per- omous snake and the work is interest-son's flesh. She really thought George ing. Each man has a pole, one of thters, Gladys and Bea- Washington Jackson had seen a garter them with a wire noose on the end of

with the snake hunt- snake or at most a harmless black it. This noose is slipped over the that they kept their feet snake, so she was very much sur- snake's head, preventing his wriggling had plenty to eat. The first a watch spring beneath a bush, the his pole and presses down the head of biggest diamond back rattler she had the snake. Then, with the reptile se-

snakes of the world so far as down- fangs into the man's hand. tured enough snakes to fill the empty right meanness is concerned. Many dia, is the most dangerous snake in canvas bag underneath the reptile. the world. It is not a rarity in zoos by any means, yet the zoo that has fine specimen of a diamond back ratappellation of George Washington to get a snake like the one the pic-Jackson something or other—none of caninny found not fifteen feet from the Ditmars ever knew his last name. the cabin was one of the principal aim of Mr. Diemars's expedition.

> Girl Captures the Serpent. This snake that flashed its baleful

eyes at Gladys Ditmars was one of the finest specimens she had ever seen and beautifully marked with the brown diamonds on its mottled back and sides. She knew that her father is a shortage of bags, is a harmless to eat and rattled continuously day tongue shoots out and the fangs bite would give a great deal to capture the snake, but her father was away, and reptile so was Mr. Snyder. So she deter- one will bite through the canvas or stilled the racket and are a big random mined to undertake the dangerous burlap and kill the other, although Rattlers are the big game of the task of capturing the snake herself, although her mother and her sister were not very keen about the ideabox of condensed milk and took the easily bite through the cloth. On them, perhaps, is in berry patches, not box. To it she fastened a pole about one occasion Mr. Snyder bagged a because they eat berries, for they do fangs. good place for snakes, and there was six feet long. Then she went to the little huckleberry patch right out in huckleberry patch. By this time the the front yard, not fifteen feet from snake, let alone, had uncoiled, and lay at full length under a bush. He George Washington Jackson," said had to coll before he could be cap-Mrs. Ditmars, "you get a bucket and tured, because the box was not large enough to cover him as he lay. So Gladys threw a handful of sand at his bucket and out he went. Inside twelve feet of the dangerous fange the house, for a few minutes, the The snake reared himself into the hree women could hear the huckle- form of the letter S, darted his forked berries plunking against the bottom of tongue in and out, swayed his flat, the boy's bucket, and they could hear diamond shaped head back and forth, George Washington Jackson crooning and colled ready to strike. At the inof the plaintive negro melodies of stant he coiled Gladys rushed toward him, and before he could lunge at her bey heard the mightlest roar of fright she dropped the box neatly over him ever issued from the throat of The next instant there was a third as child except for his tremendous brain, a May day riot at Roxbury. Mass., and cause of conscientious objections. In little darkey, then the crash of the the fangs of the reptile struck the inspecket as George Washington Jackson side of the box, but he did no damage, "ast it from him, and the next instant although later when the box was removed two strips of rattlesnak venom were streaming down the wood-enough poison to have killed a dozen men.

Once the snake was safely under the box Gladys Ditmars calmly stamped on it, driving the sides of the from the press and public. It was affirmative. box into the soft sand and effectually preventing the escape of the snake George Washington Jackson had interrupted. When her father came back

She knows a lot about he and Mr. Snyder went out to bag the

thorough housecleaning, ever seen—and she had seen some curely pinned to the ground, he seizes the two daughters big ones at the zoo. Now the diamond back rattler is the hand. He must be careful to get the swamp to look over what was to be dangerous on the North American so that the reptile cannot move his snake, and carried it to camp with the and rabbits and field mice and other their hunting ground for the next two continent. It ranks among the great head either way enough to sink his bag flung across his shoulders. Mr. small animals, and these animals are man holding the snake lifts him high containing as much as fifty or sixty

> is done quickly, the quicker the better, snake, although not the largest by and the instant the snake sinks into any means that has come out of the the bag the man holding the bag gives Great River Swamp. It measured beit a quick twirl and a twist. If this is tween six and seven feet. There is a done properly the body of the snake record of a rattler having been caught drops to the bottom of the bag and the down there that was eight feet two strike, for days waiting patiently for capture is complete. The bag is then inches long and fifteen inches in cirtled just above the squirming snake cumference. The rattler that was and another snake then may be put in caught by Miss Ditmars, however, is more than six feet long and clearly the top half of the bag. Two venom- the largest now in the Bronx Zoo. ous snakes, however, are not usually For several days after it was put in tie, but before the rabbit can escape snake put into a bag with a venomous and night. Some five days after it was deep. Naturalists who have observed reptile. There is always danger that brought to New York, however, it a rattler killing its prey say that the

> > such instances are rare. snakes they caught in muslin bags tack a human being unless they are

and Mr. Snyder went out into the most venomous snake and the most snake right behind the ears, as it were, cotton mouth moccasin, a venomous not, but because berries attract birds

Then the Ditmars has often carried big bags the prey of the snake.

As the snake goes into the air there | The rattler that Gladys Ditmars

snake hunter on this continent. Con-Mr. Ditmars and Mr. Snyder put the trary to general belief, they rarely at-

as easily as a bloodhound. The reptile little negro boy who rejoiced in the the can count itself fortunate. And strike. That is the instant in which for the zeo and is by far the finest and then it will wander back and forth, appellation of George Washington to get a snake like the one the pic-

> Soon a rabbit comes bounding along the trail. It gets to a point opposite the snake. There is a rattle and a rusthen gets up and stangers a few steps forth and bolts, the animal whole, about three feet deep. A snake could disturbed first. The best place to find Heavy leather leggings and boots, however, are proof against the rattler's

cape from a rattlesnake that didn't try to get away, but which turned and came straight at the hunters. The rattler, like all other snakes, of snared it, but before they could get it authorities contend that the diamond in the air so that his full length is off pounds of venomous snakes on his course, uses his forked tongue both as into the bag it struck. Its fangs did back, next to the hooded cobra of Inthe ground, and the other man opens a shoulders, and has never been bitten ears and nose. It is a very sensitive not quite reach Mr. Snyder's flesh, but
dia, is the most dangerous snake in canvas bag underneath the reptile. organ and with it he can follow a trail the venom squirted onto his forearm, which was bare. It happened that day is an instant during which he fixes trapped was one of four diamond his body and draws himself up to backs that the expedition obtained or other prey until it reaches water, our red bugs, or chiggers, and there durting its forked tongue in and out, was feared some of the venom might and other small animals run to drink carefully nothing appearing like snake

Mr. Snyder had one very parrow es-

it will seek a hiding place under a poisoning developed. The party was one. bush and he there, coiled and ready to prepared for things of this sort, of stake serum and antidotes. All told Mr. Ditmars's party brought

back to the zoo several hundred specimens, with thirty-two different species ous snakes, however, are not usually For several days after it was put in the same bag, nor, unless there the snake dens at the zoo it refused the snake lunges forward, the forked They caught ninety-nine snakes, of put in the same bag, nor, unless there the snake dens at the zoo it refused the snake lunges forward, the forked They caught ninety-nine snakes, of put in the same bag, nor, unless there the snake dens at the zoo it refused the snake lunges forward, the forked They caught ninety-nine snakes, of put in the same bag, nor, unless there is an arrived continuously day tongue shoots out and the fangs bite fourteen different kinds, which are now at the zoo. These include the rattlesnake, the king snake, coachforce of its blow is such that the rab-bit or other animal is knocked over, neck snake, copper belly, scarlet, water moccasin, pilot snake, the copand drops dead. Then the snake crawls perhead and the cotton mouth meccasin. The last two are poisonous.

There are also a few specimens of

rat snakes, harmless reptiles of great beauty of coloring, with bellies like a



GLADYS DITMARS, AGED 14 YEARS, WHO CAUGHT the BIG DIAMOND BACK RATTLER . The PETS ABOUT HER NECK ARE A KING and AN INDIGO SNAKE .

Huge Serpent Gives Piccaninny the Scare of His Life—Alligator Puts Up Terrific Fight, but Loses-Queer Frogs, Turtles and Toads Bagged

This rat snake, together with the slide lazily into the water and rest black snake and a few other species, on the bottom until they thought the has a curious habit of imitating a rataway. They lie in the brush and dry amount of shooting at alligators from grass, and at the approach of danger hey will coil and hiss and shake their tails about in the grass, rattling them

the Great Swamp so tame that he was | holes," deep holes running some twelve watch them on their nests and take he was able to bring his moving picure camera within a few feet of his He was cranking away industriously, stood up on her body and she squawked feebly in terror. Looking bout, Mr. Ditmars discovered a big black snake crawling toward the bird and her nest, darting its forked tongue, swaying its ugly head and

hissing like a miniature steam radia-

the better of my scientific instinct."

A Tortoise With Parasites.

One of the curious creatures Mr. the mud and sand. unusually curious habits of life. tunnels. They break and run

other kinds of animal life, which have no relation to each other in kind or In size; the gopher snake, a long rep- forefingers. tile something like a black snake, and four or five varieties of beetle, about the size of a man's thumb nail. These snakes, beetles and frogs are parafect harmony with the tortoise and

They can go at a tremendous speed, taken and the only way to catch one is to keep a sharp lookout, and chase it at when Mr. Ditmars and Mr. Snyder keep a sharp lookout, and chosel Even when Mr. Ditmars and as fast as possible. Even thought they had discovered the burning the state of the burning the burning the burning the state of the burning the state of the burning the state of the burning the burning the state of the burning the then it is a question of luck in finding rows of a new species of animal. The witness stated that the Soviet ness" by which a child learns most to it. The same thing applies to the gopher snake. All these have one the environment of the home as tend-lence. Political Socialists, he said, beside the environment of the home as tend-lence mainly in the ballot and the Bollieve mainly in the ballot and the Bollie

> ge and caught is to find one sitting at the country of any animal. The way this at the caught is to find one sitting at the country of the co any animal. The way this frog is shovel. He never tries to turn around Savannah River and bury their stolen Commercial medicerity is idea appears to be to get as far into sands of the cypress swamps. A month him up and put him in a bag.

Catches Alligators.

ides like an Oriental rug pattern. When anything approached they would order to frighten its enemies few years, because of the great

f them. On one occasion Mr. Ditmars This muddy water, and the fact that ing of a metal door, and the prev is

unusual moving picture of a snake when people don't know their habits killing a bird-but Mr. Ditmars killed or how to catch them, but it is com-"My better nature," he said, "got hunter. A "gator" hook is used, an he better of my scientific instinct." Iron hook fastened to the end of a long paratively simple to the experienced and strong pole. The hole is located, and the hook and pole slid down into Ditmars brought back to the zoo was at home, he lets himself be poked and the gopher tortoise, a sizable land tur- pummelled for about fifteen minutes. This tortoise has feet like those of an he bites is the real signal the "gator" then he bites at the pole. The tug as elephant, and digs a tunnel twelve is there. Then the man at the end of ous red bugs, or chiggers, and there feet deep or more, dragging out the the pole works it about until it catches sand and piling it in a high mound at in his scales or behind his forelegsmelling and listening. If it happens get into his blood through the broken to go near one of these gopher tor- the alligator is drawn forth and a as soon as they come within sight of it appears. With this he is held, and noose slipped over his head as soon as Naturalists never have found more This is the ticklish part of the procourse, and had unlimited supplies of than one tortoise in a tunnel, but live ceedings, because an alligator is quick ing with the tortoise often are several despite his bulk. But while his faws are very powerful in closing he cannot species and which are seen nowhere pressure. In fact, the jaws of the bigopen them against any considerable else. They are the gopher frog. a gest alligator in the Bronx Zoo can beautifully spotted creature varying be held together with the thumbs and

> Once the laws are secured, a pole is cut some feet longer than the body of the alligator, and three nooses are put sites; they don't help the fortoise dig pole, and two men can carry the "gator" out of the swamp on their shoulders. Still tied to the pole, the These tortoises are difficult to catch. "gator" is pitched into a wagon and taken back to camp, harmless as a

no other place of refuge. When danger approaches they run for their own burrow, although there may be others nearer.

The gopher frog is an exceedingly but no strange animals appeared.

Then they asked one of their darky

consideration of \$25 each agreed to tell Mr. Ditmars brought back two fine burded. He collected several burdeed specimens of alligators, one of them dollars, and then with a great deal of tions in the sand as he had customers long, put up a terrific battle before he He then told them very solemnly to was dragged out of his hole in a come to that spot in the light of the swamp and loaded into a wason for moon, stand directly over the stake transportation to the cabin. It is not and dig at the end of their shadow so easy to catch niligators as it used. Then he sailed away on a river to be. In the old days they used to steamer.

Sidis, the Boy Wonder, Turns Bolshevist

the graduation from Harvard of 15, and later of his lecturing learnedly on mathematics before a group of graybeards, stunning them all with his prodigious knowledge, have now something new to say about precocity. The but that any child could so far out-distance his fellows was rather a re-months in the House of Correction. flection on the O'Reilly and McGilli-

with him. When it was reported shortly after commonly held that no child could be healthy who was encumbered with Justice of the prodigy.

It was true that as a small child boss of Christianity," Sidis answered. Sidis did not like to play; but that, it "Do you believe in the American developed, was due to fear of dogs. He flag?" to the cabin with Mr. Snyder she told felt that whenever a dog approached him of her capture. He laughed. he must take hold of his mother's "A diamond back rattler," he said, hand, and as his mother could not lieved in the American form of gov"is principally what we came down constantly be out playing with him here for. That you should catch one he preferred to stay indoors. Teachers

OND parents who were shocked were annoyed in his elementary | a few years ago at reading of schooling by his impatience with the things they were laboriously driving lence. Political Socialists, he said, beinto the polls of his less nimble minded lieve mainly in the ballot and the Bolof William James Sidis, son of Prof. companions. "I knew that before. Boris Sidis, a psychologist, at the age Why do you keep saying it?" was his red in the red flag. Sidis asserted.

Now He's a Bolshevist.

Sidis now at the age of 21 is a Socialist and an avowed advocate of boy wonder was said to be a normal Bolshevism. He carried a red flag in claimed exemption from the draft bethe judicial allotment being divided cuddy offspring who had started even between one year for assault committed upon a policeman and six such language. months for rioting. Justice Hayden his entrance into Harvard at the age sitting in the Roxbury court asked of 11 that he had been taken ill a him if he believed in the Soviet form chorus of "I told you so's" went up of Government, and his reply was

"Do you believe in God?" asked the "Not in the kind of God that is the "Do you believe in the American

"In certain ways." To another question he said he besheviki in control of industry. The stands for the common blood of humanity, as it does in the American

Sidis was then put through a cross examination and admitted that he he had said, "To hell with the Ameri-

the young prodigy appealed his case raised at home and cultivated in the and was held in \$5,000 bonds for the school."

Idea appears to be to get as far into the burrow as possible. Then, of or so before Mr. Ditmars and his party course, nothing remains but to pick reached the Great Swamp a fortune

"The father works in some business," he said, "or at some trade and loves sports and games. Not a spark most foolish looking face of almost helpers what sort of animals made the of refinement and culture, not a redeeming ray of love, of knowledge and of art light up the commonplace and frivolous life of the family. redirect examination he said he does wonder that the children of 10 and 11 not believe in force. He denied that can hardly read and write, are little immediately dives into the tunnel and pirate days Capt. Kidd and Capt. Mor brutes, and waste away their precious tries frantically to get through the gan and the others used to sail up the can flag," adding that he never used life of childhood in close, dusty over-After sentence had been pronounced school? Commercial medicerity is idea appears to be to get as for the tunnel; his only dauds of the corress swarms. A mostly

There is no reason to doubt that Prof. Boris Sidis, who claimed full Prof. Sidis still holds to these views credit for the unusual mental develop- whether or not he sympathizes with ment of the boy which he began when the present predicament of his prodigy his son was 2 years old in 1911, pre- It is quite likely, however, that many pared an attack on the whole educa-tional system. He argued that the school system should be abolished and with it the "psychologizing educator," Sidis deplores rather than to give them ma'am," because he said they were re- who will raise them to such mental stricting rapid development and put capacity that they will think of gova damper on the "spirit of inquisitive- ernment only in terms of revolution.